



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/810,261	03/26/2004	Steven D. Bickel	M61.12-0627	1126
27366	7590	06/12/2009		
WESTMAN CHAMPLIN (MICROSOFT CORPORATION)			EXAMINER	
SUITE 1400			CHANDLER, SARA M	
900 SECOND AVENUE SOUTH			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402			3693	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			06/12/2009	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/810,261	Applicant(s) BICKEL ET AL.
	Examiner SARA CHANDLER	Art Unit 3693

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If no period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(o).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04/10/09.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 10-21 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) 1-9 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 03/26/04/ 08/29/08
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

Applicant's election without traverse of Invention I, (claims 1-9) in the reply filed on 04/10/09 is acknowledged.

Claim Interpretation

1. In determining patentability of an invention over the prior art, all claim limitations have been considered and interpreted as broadly as their terms reasonably allow. See MPEP § 2111.

Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

Applicant always has the opportunity to amend the claims during prosecution, and broad interpretation by the examiner reduces the possibility that the claim, once issued, will be interpreted more broadly than is justified. *In re Pruter*, 415 F.2d 1393, 1404-05, 162 USPQ 541, 550-51 (CCPA 1969). See MPEP § 2111.

2. All claim limitations have been considered. Additionally, all words in the claims have been considered in judging the patentability of the claims against the prior art. See MPEP 2106 II C. The following language is interpreted as not further limiting the scope of the claimed invention. See MPEP § 2106 II C.

Language in a method claim that states only the intended use or intended result, but the expression does not result in a manipulative difference in the steps of the claim.

Language in a system claim that states only the intended use or intended result, but does not result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art.

In other words, if the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim.

Claim limitations that contain statement(s) such as "*if, may, might, can could*", as optional language. As matter of linguistic precision, optional claim elements do not narrow claim limitations, since they can always be omitted.

Claim limitations that contain statement(s) such as "*wherein, whereby*", that fail to further define the steps or acts to be performed in method claims or the discrete physical structure required of system claims.

USPTO personnel should begin claim analysis by identifying and evaluating each claim limitation. For processes, the claim limitations will define steps or acts to be performed. For products, the claim limitations will define discrete physical structures or materials. Product claims are claims that are directed to either machines, manufactures or compositions of matter. See MPEP § 2106 II C.

The subject matter of a properly construed claim is defined by the terms that limit its scope. It is this subject matter that must be examined. As a general matter, the grammar and intended meaning of terms used in a claim will dictate whether the language limits the claim scope. Language that suggests or makes optional but does not require steps to be performed or does not limit a claim to a particular structure does not limit the scope of a claim or claim limitation. The following are examples of language that may raise a question as to the limiting effect of the language in a claim:

- (A) statements of intended use or field of use,
- (B) "adapted to" or "adapted for" clauses,
- (C) "wherein" clauses, or
- (D) "whereby" clauses.

See MPEP § 2106 II C.

3. Independent claims are examined together, since they are not patentable distinct. If applicant expressly states on the record that two or more independent and distinct

inventions are claimed in a single application, the Examiner may require the applicant to elect an invention to which the claims will be restricted.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. .

Re Claim 1: Not a proper method (i.e., process) claim.

In order for a method to be considered a "process" under 101, a claimed process must either: (1) be tied to another statutory class (such as a particular apparatus) or (2) transform underlying subject matter (such as an article or materials). *Diamond v. Diehr*, 450 U.S. 175, 184 (1981); *Parker v. Flook*, 437 U.S. 584, 588 n.9 (1978); *Gottschalk v. Benson*, 409 U.S. 63, 70 (1972); *In re Bilski*, 88 USPQ2d 1385, 1391 and 1396 (2008).

The process steps recited in the body of the claim may be performed by a human operator alone.

Dependent claims are further rejected based on the same rationale as the claims from which they depend.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential elements, essential steps and/or essential structural cooperative relationships of elements such omission amounting to a gap between the elements, the steps and/or the necessary structural connections . See MPEP § 2172.01. The omitted elements, steps and/or structural cooperative relationships are:

Claim 1 recites, "A method of mapping dimension-based accounting data to allow segment-based reporting, the method comprising:"

Although the claimed invention recites this objective in the preamble of the claim, the steps or acts performed in the body of the claim fail to accomplish this result.

Re Clam 1: The claimed invention refers to "selecting a set of dimensions from the dimension-based accounting data" Prior to the step of selecting, "the dimension-based accounting data" would need to be retrieved or entered as an input (i.e., into an underlying system ?? performing this process).

Claim 1 recites, "defining an order for the dimensions in the set of dimensions to define the segment-based account code structure;"

It would seem that before an order may be defined there needs to be more than one dimension present. If only one dimension is present, how could an order be defined? Should this recite "two or more dimensions", "plurality of dimensions etc."

There is insufficient antecedent basis for "the dimensions" in the claim.

Claim 1 recites, "A method of mapping dimension-based accounting data **to** *allow* segment-based reporting, the method comprising:

selecting a set of dimensions from the dimension-based accounting data for a segment-based account code structure;

defining an order for the dimensions in the set of dimensions **to** define the segment-based account code structure; and

using the segment-based account code structure and the dimension-based data **to** construct account codes."

Please see remarks supra on claim interpretation. The language in bold, italicized wording is written passively, written as an intended use/result etc. and raises a question as to whether the subject matter following the terms are required limitations of the claimed invention. Please note that the claims have been given their broadest reasonable interpretation and thus the subject matter following these terms have been interpreted has not further limiting of the claimed invention.

Note: Applicant may wish to positively recite each step or act performed by the claimed invention (E.g., "defining the segment-based account code structure based on the order"; "constructing account codes based on the segment-based account code structure and the dimension-based data."

Re Claims 1 and 8: The singular/plural relationship between terms is unclear. It is unclear whether the account code(s) constructed pertain to one account or each of a plurality of accounts. It is unclear whether a plurality of "account codes" are constructed as suggested by claim 1 or a single "account code" as suggested by claim 8.

Re Claims 2-6 and 8: Similar to claim 1, please correct the use of terms such as "using", "if" and "to" that raise a question as to the limiting effect of the subsequent language in the claim. Please see remarks supra on claim interpretation.

Claim 8 recites, "wherein constructing an account codes comprises:"

As noted supra, with respect to claim 1. This step or act is never done and has only been recited in the claimed invention as an intended use/result. Please see remarks supra on claim interpretation.

Dependent claims are further rejected based on the same rationale as the claims from which they depend.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

- (e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Minnis, US Pub. No. 2004/0230508.

Re Claim 1: Minnis discloses a method of mapping dimension-based accounting data to allow segment-based reporting, the method comprising:
selecting a set of dimensions from the dimension-based accounting data for a segment-based account code structure (Minnis, abstract, [0013] [0072] [0074] [0075] [0090] [0093] [0104] [0105] [0119] [0120] [0122] [0123] [[0124] [0153] [0157]);
defining an order for the dimensions in the set of dimensions to define the segment-based account code structure (Minnis, abstract, [0013] [0072] [0074] [0075] [0090] [0093] [0104] [0105] [0119] [0120] [0122] [0123] [[0124] [0153] [0157]); and
using the segment-based account code structure and the dimension-based data to construct account codes (Minnis, abstract, [0013] [0072] [0074] [0075] [0090] [0093] [0104] [0105] [0119] [0120] [0122] [0123] [[0124] [0153] [0157]).

Re Claim 2: Minnis discloses the claimed invention supra and further discloses wherein selecting a set of dimensions comprises validating values associated with the dimensions using rules associated with segment-based reporting (Minnis, abstract, [0072] [0074] [0075] [0090] [0157]).

Re Claim 3: Minnis discloses the claimed invention supra and further discloses wherein validating a value comprises determining if the value includes a character that is not valid in an account code (Minnis, abstract, [0072] [0074] [0075] [0090] [0157]).

Re Claim 4: Minnis discloses the claimed invention supra and further discloses wherein validating a value comprises determining if the length of the value exceeds a length set for the value (Minnis, abstract, [0072] [0074] [0075] [0090] [0157]).

Re Claim 5: Minnis discloses the claimed invention supra and further discloses wherein validating a value comprises determining if the value is null (Minnis, abstract, [0072] [0074] [0075] [0090] [0157]).

Re Claim 6: Minnis discloses the claimed invention supra and further discloses providing an error message if a value violates a rule associated with segment-based reporting (Minnis, abstract, [0072] [0074] [0075] [0090] [0157]).

Re Claim 7: Minnis discloses the claimed invention supra and further discloses wherein defining the account code structure comprises generating table entries that link segments of the account code structure to dimension headings in tables that contain the dimension-based data (Minnis, abstract {0090} {0104} [0105] [0106] [0119] [0125] [0139]).

Re Claim 8: Minnis discloses the claimed invention supra and further discloses wherein constructing an account codes comprises:
locating an entry in the dimension-based data (Minnis, abstract, [0013] [0072] [0074] [0075] [0090] [0093] [0104] [0105] [0119] [0120] [0122] [0123] [[0124] [0153] [0157]);
identifying dimension values from the entry (Minnis, abstract, [0013] [0072] [0074] [0075] [0090] [0093] [0104] [0105] [0119] [0120] [0122] [0123] [[0124] [0153] [0157]);
and combining the identified dimension values based on the account code structure to construct the account code (Minnis, abstract, [0013] [0072] [0074] [0075] [0090] [0093] [0104] [0105] [0119] [0120] [0122] [0123] [[0124] [0153] [0157]).

Re Claim 9: Minnis discloses the claimed invention supra and further discloses wherein locating an entry comprises locating an entry having at least one balance value

(Minnis, abstract, [0013] [0072] [0074] [0075] [0090] [0093] [0104] [0105] [0119] [0120] [0122] [0123] [[0124] [0153] [0157]).

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

US 20070179870 A1

US 20050108163 A1

US 20050086135 A1

US 20050086125 A1

US 20040088232 A1

US 20030046194 A1

US 20020156687 A1

US 20020138375 A1

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to SARA CHANDLER whose telephone number is (571)272-1186. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Kramer can be reached on 571-272-6783. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3693

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

SMC

/JAGDISH N PATEL/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3693